**UNITED NATIONS** **S**

**Security Council**

Distr.
GENERAL

S/1998/221
12 March 1998

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

LETTER DATED 11 MARCH 1998 FROM THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I have the honour to convey the attached letter dated 9 March 1998 which I have received from the Chairman of the International Monitoring Committee established pursuant to the mandate of the Inter-African Mission to Monitor the Implementation of the Bangui Agreements (MISAB) (see annex).

Attached to the letter is the report of the Member States participating in MISAB, as requested by the Security Council in its resolution 1152 (1998) of 5 February 1998. I should be grateful if you would bring the letter and its enclosure to the attention of the members of the Security Council.

(Signed) Kofi A. ANNAN

98-06035 (E) 120398 120398

/...

Annex

[Original: French]

Letter dated 9 March 1998 from the Chairman of the International Monitoring Committee addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit to you herewith the report covering the period from 3 February to 10 March 1998, requested by the Security Council in paragraph 10 of its resolution 1152 (1998) concerning the situation in the Central African Republic.

(Signed) Gen. Amadou Toumani TOURÉ
Chairman of the International
Monitoring Committee

Appendix

[Original: French]

Report to the Security Council pursuant to resolution 1152 (1998) concerning the situation in the Central African Republic

(10 March 1998)

## I. INTRODUCTION

1. On 5 February 1998, the Security Council unanimously adopted its resolution 1152 (1998), which was a continuation of its earlier resolution 1136 (1997). In paragraph 10 of its resolution 1152 (1998), the Council requested the Member States participating in the Inter-African Mission to Monitor the Implementation of the Bangui Agreements (MISAB), namely, the International Monitoring Committee for the Follow-up of the Bangui Agreements, which represents them, to provide a report to the Security Council through the Secretary-General before 16 March 1998.

2. This report describes the developments in the situation in the Central African Republic during the period from 3 February to 10 March 1998.

## II. POLITICAL LEADERSHIP

3. The International Monitoring Committee for the Follow-up of the Bangui Agreements, chaired by General Amadou Toumani Touré, is the body that directs the actions of MISAB, since it receives the necessary political guidance directly from the heads of State concerned, and especially from the President of the Gabonese Republic, who is Chairman of the International Mediation Committee.

4. MISAB is under the patronage of President El Hadj Omar Bongo of the Gabon Republic, senior head of State of the International Mediation Committee. It is under the political authority of General Amadou Toumani Touré, Chairman of the International Monitoring Committee.

## III. LOGISTICAL AND TECHNICAL SUPPORT TO THE INTERNATIONAL MONITORING COMMITTEE

5. It should be noted that, since its establishment by the heads of the States members of the International Mediation Committee, the International Monitoring Committee has received logistical and technical support from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

## IV. LOGISTICAL AND FINANCIAL SUPPORT TO THE MISSION

6. As indicated in the previous reports, MISAB receives logistical support from the participating States, France and the Government of the Central African Republic. It also received support previously from the Organization of African Unity (OAU).

7. The International Monitoring Committee welcomes the imminent establishment of a United Nations peacekeeping force in the Central African Republic to strengthen the peace that has been restored with the involvement and support of the International Monitoring Committee and MISAB. While not wishing to prejudge the mission to be entrusted to the peacekeeping force, the Committee suggests that its mandate include the implementation of those provisions of the Bangui Agreements that have not yet been implemented.

## V. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE BANGUI AGREEMENTS

8. The Bangui Agreements of 25 January 1997, the outcome of strenuous efforts of the Committee on Consensus-building and Dialogue, endorsed and chaired by General Amadou Toumani Touré, Chairman of the International Monitoring Committee, constitute the indispensable basis for the establishment and strengthening of peace and the achievement of national reconciliation, a necessary stage in the rehabilitation and reconstruction of the Central African Republic.

9. The implementation of these Agreements was planned in accordance with a timetable established by the International Monitoring Committee and accepted by all. However, it must be acknowledged that there has been some delay in the full implementation of certain provisions deemed important by one or another of the parties. After the many incidents that have lined the perilous path of the national reconciliation process, implementation of the main headings in the timetable established by the Committee is currently proceeding at a somewhat faster pace.

10. The Forum to Evaluate the Implementation of the Bangui Agreements, held on 19 February 1998, noted the following:

(a) A number of major provisions have been implemented in their entirety; these provisions concern:

- Deployment of an inter-African force;
- Formation of a government of national union;
- Abandonment of the judicial enforcement of the parliamentary audit;
- Amnesty covering offences in the context of the third rebellion;

- Certain disarmament issues (reintegration of the soldiers who took part in the rebellion into the Central African armed forces, security measures and resumption of short-wave broadcasts by Radio Centrafricaine);

- Situation of former heads of State (Act No. 97/012 of 31 October 1997 has been followed by Implementation Decree No. 98.038 of 4 March 1998);

- Pacification measures, especially security conditions in educational institutions and the revision of the 1996/97 school calendar;

- Measures to ensure peace and development;

- Preliminary Agreement on a National Reconciliation Pact.

The provision concerning the holding of a national reconciliation conference, which on 19 February 1998 was considered to be in the process of implementation, should now be included among the provisions that have been implemented, following the memorable conference held from 26 February to 5 March 1998.

(b) Other provisions are in an advanced stage of implementation; these provisions concern:

- The Electoral Code and the Independent Joint Electoral Commission (the relevant bill, which was considered for the first time at a special session of the National Assembly in February, will probably be adopted during the National Assembly's regular session, which began on 9 March 1998);

- The Press Code and the National Council for Radio and Television (the relevant bills will be considered during this first session of the National Assembly);

- Recommendations of the General Meeting on National Defence;

- Procedures for appointment to the University of Bangui.

(c) Certain provisions implementation of which has begun and will continue over a more or less extended period; these provisions concern:

- Implementation of the Political Agreement Protocol and the Minimum Standards Programme;

- Respect for the Constitution and constitutional legality, for the institutions, laws and regulations of the Republic, and for human rights;

- National reconciliation with its two components: evaluation of the damage caused by the various crises and compensation of the victims;

- Good governance.

(d) Certain other provisions have not yet begun to be implemented; these provisions concern:

- Recommendations of the General Meeting on Youth;
- Amendment of the codes of criminal procedure;
- Streamlining of the Office of the President of the Republic;
- Revision of certain articles of the Constitution;
- Negotiation of a social contract with trade unions.

11. It must be stressed that the thorny problem of arrears of wages and salaries, pensions and scholarships unfortunately falls into the category of measures that have not yet been implemented owing to the precarious state of the national economy and public finance.

12. Following an assessment of all the provisions that have not yet been implemented or have been implemented only in part, a three-stage plan of action (short, medium and long term) was prepared and submitted to the National Reconciliation Conference, which adopted the plan with a number of slight amendments.

13. More specifically, we are pleased to report that all the headings in the timetable established by the International Monitoring Committee have been implemented either entirely or in part (at an advanced stage).

14. In particular, the heading concerning disarmament is still being implemented, even if the recovery of arms is proceeding at a slower pace than at the outset. The disarmament operations in Bangui took place in accordance with methodology described in the previous reports. To date, the results have been as follows:

(a) Heavy weapons: 92.91 per cent;

(b) Light weapons: 57.47 per cent;

(c) Munitions of various types: 464,604 units;

(d) Explosives and detonators: 26,714 units.

15. Considering the various factors mentioned in the previous reports, it is easy to understand why the recovery of all light weapons remains uncertain in spite of all the means and strategies employed. While some hope remains for the successful continuation of disarmament operations both in Bangui and in remote areas of the country, it would be unrealistic to believe that the recovery of light weapons will be as extensive as that of heavy weapons.

16. In the light of the various unconfirmed rumours, which have given rise to suspicion and a sort of psychosis, to the effect that a quantity of weapons difficult to estimate was imported into the country on various dates, the

International Monitoring Committee and MISAB believe that the disarmament operations are not yet finished, and are continuing to devote painstaking and patient attention to them.

17. It is clear that the accounts relating to weapons recovery pertain only to arms and munitions taken from the State armouries. This is why the International Monitoring Committee and MISAB have remained vigilant and have not ignored any information provided to them concerning weapons caches.

18. The provision concerning the parliamentary audit has had varying degrees of success, and an act was finally adopted by the National Assembly on 13 February 1998 and promulgated as Act No. 98.003 on the same day by the President of the Republic.

19. With regard to the provision on the implementation of the recommendations of the General Meeting on National Defence, the Commission on the Restructuring of the Defence and Security Forces, chaired by the Minister of Defence under the supervision of the Chairman of the International Monitoring Committee, filed its report on 29 January 1998. The Commission provides the framework in which solutions acceptable to all can be worked out for the main recommendations in dispute. These are the recommendations relating to the "dissolution" of the Section d'enquête, de recherche et de la documentation (Survey, Research and Documentation Section) and the Centre national de recherche et d'investigation (National Research and Investigation Centre) and the recommendation relating to the "reduction of the staff" of the Presidential Guard. The Commission on the Restructuring of the Defence and Security Forces has decided on:

(a) Dissolution of the Section d'enquête, de recherche et de la documentation and the assignment of its members to their original units;

(b) Dissolution of the Centre national de recherche et d'investigation;

(c) Establishment of a documentation bureau to take charge of national security;

(d) Strict implementation of Presidential Decree No. 94/87 of 8 March 1994 concerning the Presidential Guard, which conferred on the Guard functions accepted by all (excluding abuses, which were noted and censured), and, consequently, restriction of the number of members of that unit.

20. On 4 March 1998, the President of the Republic signed decrees dealing with the four above-mentioned measures. However, it must be acknowledged that certain provisions differ from the proposals submitted by the Commission on the Restructuring of the Defence and Security Forces, in particular with regard to the presence in the provinces of a battalion of the new Force spéciale pour la défense des institutions républicaines (Special Force for the Defence of Republican Institutions) and the inclusion of an investigatory police unit in the Direction générale de la documentation d'État (Directorate-General for State Documentation) attached to the Office of the President of the Republic.

21. The National Reconciliation Conference finally took place from 26 February to 5 March 1998. It was opened by President Patassé, with the participation of representatives from all components of Central African society. A few incidents occurred but were quickly brought under control thanks to the vigilance of the International Monitoring Committee and the real desire of the majority of the Central African people to achieve national reconciliation. Thus, the suspension declared by the delegates of the Groupe des onze partis politiques de l'opposition (Group of Eleven), the Mouvement pour la démocratie et le développement (Movement for Democracy and Development) and the Union des syndicats des travailleurs centrafricains (Union of Trade Unions of Central African Workers) was of short duration.

22. At the technical level, the work of the Conference, chaired by Reverend Isaac Zokoé, Dean of the Bangui School of Theology, proceeded smoothly thanks to the methodical and meticulous preparation by the Preparatory Committee headed by Mr. Laurent Gomina-Pampali, Minister for Human Rights and Promotion of Democratic Culture and National Reconciliation, with the political support of the International Monitoring Committee and financing from UNDP.

23. After six days of work, the National Reconciliation Conference adopted a number of important resolutions and decisions the most important of which are those relating to the National Reconciliation Pact and its annexes (Plan of Action for the effective implementation of the provisions of the Bangui Agreements that have not yet been implemented and the establishment of the Monitoring and Arbitration Committee).

24. Other resolutions and recommendations should also be mentioned:

(a) Recommendation on regionalization and decentralization;

(b) Recommendation on the restoration of the authority of traditional leaders;

(c) Recommendation on the implementation of the Family Code;

(d) Recommendation on the implementation of the conclusions of the General Meeting on Youth;

(e) Recommendation on the implementation of the National Population Policy;

(f) Recommendation on the organization of the General Meeting on Economy and Finance;

(g) Recommendation on foreign relations;

(h) Recommendation on the preparation and implementation of a national plan of action to combat poverty;

(i) Recommendation on respect for democratic rules;

(j) Resolution on the economic and social situation;

(k) Resolution on the administrative situation;

(l) Resolution on national union;

(m) Resolution on democratic culture;

(n) Resolution on the political situation;

(o) Resolution on an agreement between the Central African Republic and the Bretton Woods institutions;

(p) Resolution on the measures to be taken to compensate the victims of the rebellions;

(q) Resolution on the proclamation of 5 March as National Day of Reconciliation.

25. The Conference also took note of three declarations and two motions to strengthen the spirit of reconciliation among all components of the nation. As Mr. Laurent Gomina-Pampali, General Rapporteur of the Conference, concluded:

> "The important results that have been achieved are a result of the physical, moral and political contributions of all components of the Central African nation during the six days of work. These results involve all components. Their effective implementation is the condition sine qua non for the country's return to peace and unity, and its ability to ensure sustainable human development."

26. The closing meeting was held on 5 March 1998 under the chairmanship of His Excellency President El Hadj Omar Bongo of Gabon, and was attended by President Idriss Deby of Chad, President Alpha Oumar Konaré of Mali, President Laurent Désiré Kabila of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, President Omar Hassan al-Bashir of the Sudan, General Amadou Toumani Touré, Chairman of the International Monitoring Committee, representatives of the heads of State of Senegal, Burkina Faso, Togo, Uganda and Cameroon, Mr. Ibrahima Fall, Assistant Secretary-General of the United Nations for Political Affairs, representatives of the Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity, the Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization (UNESCO), the Secretary-General of the French-Speaking Communities (Francophonie) and the Administrator of UNDP.

27. After listening to the messages of the Secretary-General of the French-Speaking Communities, the Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity, the Director-General of UNESCO, the Administrator of UNDP and the Secretary-General of the United Nations, the General Rapporteur of the Conference presented the results of the work of the Conference, the success of which justified the deep satisfaction of all participants.

28. Three important statements, full of lessons of wisdom, tolerance, acceptance of the right to be different, love of one's neighbour, national solidarity and peaceful coexistence among all of the country's social strata and

ethnic groups marked the conclusion of this great meeting, which will be a milestone in the history of the Central African Republic:

(a) Statement by General Amadou Toumani Touré, Chairman of the International Monitoring Committee;

(b) Statement by Mr. Ange Félix Patassé, President of the Central African Republic, Head of State;

(c) Statement by El Hadj Omar Bongo, President of the Gabonese Republic, Chairman of the International Mediation Committee.

29. One concern was widely shared by the participants in the National Reconciliation Conference, namely, the need to create a climate conducive to national reconciliation. Necessary and useful conditions for the creation of such a climate include:

(a) Regular payment of wages and salaries;

(b) Full implementation of the various provisions of the Bangui Agreements;

(c) Vigorous measures to ensure economic recovery (including an agreement with the Bretton Woods institutions);

(d) Launching of initiatives to find a solution to the problems of the victims of the rebellions.

30. Given the excellent results of the National Reconciliation Conference, it is to be hoped that the situation will progressively improve. One of the most significant indications of the beginning of the long-awaited détente was the understanding, reached on 3 March 1998 through the good offices of the International Monitoring Committee, between the Minister of the Interior, General François Ndjadder-Bedaya, and Professor Abel Goumba, acting on behalf of the Group of Eleven. It should be recalled that General Ndjadder had lodged a complaint against the leaders of the Group of Eleven following a statement made by those leaders on 1 July 1997 that the General considered slanderous. This incident jeopardized not only the holding of the Conference but also the entire process of restoring and strengthening peace. As a result of the understanding, General Ndjadder withdrew his complaint, to the relief of all concerned.

## VI. COOPERATION WITH THE CENTRAL AFRICAN AUTHORITIES AND THE VARIOUS GROUPS OF POLITICAL PARTIES

31. The International Monitoring Committee remains in permanent contact with all persons active in the country's political and social life during this final stage of the Mission in which the essential measures to be taken to strengthen peace cannot and must not be neglected. The Committee and MISAB must therefore not lower their guard until they are replaced by the proposed United Nations peacekeeping force.

## VII. COOPERATION WITH INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

32. Everyone in Bangui (the political class, civil society, the military and foreigners) is convinced of the need for the presence after 16 March 1998 of a military and security force that would help consolidate the peace and stimulate the process of national reconciliation. Everyone recognizes that, even though the elections are not an end in themselves, their smooth conduct can only help stabilize the situation.

33. In spite of all the recovery efforts currently in progress, the Central African Republic, where industrial and commercial activities have clearly been in a state of paralysis for several months, is still experiencing difficulties in meeting both its internal obligations (wages and salaries, pensions, scholarships, the functioning of basic social services and of the State apparatus) and its external commitments, in particular the repayment of the arrears due to the Bretton Woods institutions.

34. Moreover, failure to resolve the problem of arrears of wages and salaries, pensions and scholarships accounts for the persistence of a very charged social situation. The main concern of the Central African authorities is therefore to find the resources needed to resolve the problem of seven months' arrears of wages and salaries and several additional months' arrears of pensions and scholarships.

35. The groups of affiliated trade unions, which hitherto have demonstrated a great deal of understanding and moderation given the situation, are beginning to show signs of irritation and impatience.

## VIII. DEPLOYMENT OF THE FORCE

36. Brigadier-General Barthélémy Ratanga, recently appointed by President Bongo to replace late Brigadier-General Augustin Mombo-Moukagni, took up his duties on 27 February 1998, becoming the third Commander of MISAB.

37. MISAB is continuing to ensure security in all neighbourhoods of the Central African capital by occupying 20 surveillance posts and is participating in joint security patrols in conjunction with the Central African security and defence forces in all districts of Bangui.

38. Hold-ups, armed robberies and other criminal acts have diminished considerably thanks both to the progress achieved in disarmament and the constant vigilance instituted by the system of joint patrols.

## IX. CONCLUSIONS

39. The International Monitoring Committee for the Follow-up of the Bangui Agreements is keenly interested in extending until 15 April 1998 the effect of Security Council resolution 1152 (1998) relating to the mandate of MISAB, as recommended by the Secretary-General. This period will enable the various parties concerned to make all the necessary arrangements for the deployment of a

multinational force during the post-MISAB period in order to ensure the security conditions required for the implementation of essential reforms and the organization of free, democratic and transparent elections.

40. The International Monitoring Committee hopes to continue to enjoy the logistical and technical support of UNDP in order to pursue its twofold mission of ensuring the political direction of MISAB and monitoring the implementation of the Bangui Agreements through continuing mediation until the relevant Security Council decisions have been implemented.

41. In order to avoid any slippage or any risk of a return to square one, which might lead to social disruption, it is urged that all measures should be taken at the appropriate levels, including the level of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, to promote greater awareness among States Members of the United Nations, international organizations and financial institutions with a view to providing the necessary assistance to the development of the Central African Republic, as requested by the Security Council in paragraph 9 its resolution 1152 (1998). It is well understood that all these measures will complement the necessary efforts of the Central African authorities. Any contrary approach could jeopardize the opportunity for this country to overcome the crisis once and for all, thus irreparably causing the failure of this original experiment in internal conflict resolution that the current mediation effort in the Central African Republic represents.

42. The International Monitoring Committee is determined to succeed in its mission, which is to satisfy the expectations of the peoples and heads of State of Africa that the Central African crisis will be properly settled, and it will continue to spare no effort in urging all the parties to the Central African crisis to continue to work with wisdom and dignity towards the effective implementation of the Bangui Agreements. This is the price of real and lasting peace.

43. At a meeting that he chaired on Monday, 9 March 1998, and attended by members of the Government and by prefects and mayors from all over the country, His Excellency Mr. Ange Félix Patassé, President of the Republic and Head of State, reiterated his unwavering commitment to respect the National Reconciliation Pact that he signed together with official representatives of the various components of the nation on 5 March 1998.

44. The International Monitoring Committee hopes that the structures that will replace it and MISAB, namely the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and the United Nations International Mission in the Central African Republic (MINURCA), will make every effort not only to complete the tasks already begun but also to strengthen the peace that has been regained with the invaluable and unforgettable assistance of the countries participating in MISAB, France, UNDP and OAU.

45. The International Monitoring Committee and MISAB are pleased to have made, together with the heads of State of the International Mediation Committee, their very African contribution to the search for solutions to the serious crisis that

nearly rent the heart of Africa. They are grateful to all components of Central African society, particularly official authorities at all levels and officials of political parties and trade unions, for their vital and inspiring cooperation with the mediation team in a spirit of African solidarity and in the higher interests of the Central African Republic.

---